

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action dated July 15, 2005 and in response to the telephonic interview of October 17, 2005 between the Examiner and Applicants' attorney, Reginald J. Hill. Claims 1-18 and 20 are pending. In the Office Action of June 15, 2004, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 6-12, 16-18 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dunko et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,553,236 ("Dunko") in view of Fitch et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,424,840 ("Fitch"). The Examiner rejected claims 3 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dunko in view of Fitch and further in view of Serbetciouglu et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,719,918 (Serbetciouglu). The Examiner rejected claims 4, 5, 14 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dunko in view of Fitch and further in view of Jampolsky et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,625,437 (Jampolsky").

Applicants' attorney appreciates the courtesy extended by the Examiner in the telephonic interview of October 17, 2000. In the telephonic interview, no agreement was reached but the Examiner did agree to consider this written response. In the interview Applicants' attorney explained and argued that the claims were distinguishable from the prior art, at least because the prior art fails to disclose receiving a request for geographical zone data where the request includes a zone type of a plurality of predefined zone types. In the prior art there are no zone types. Instead, the prior art assumes one type of zone type, implicitly, and returns the location information for the assumed or predefined single zone type. This distinction is discussed further below.

In rejecting all of the claims, the Examiner relies upon Dunko as disclosing "a present location of remote members that identifies a type of predetermined geographical area (column 9, lines 31 - 32)." The Examiner analogizes this to the "zone type" specified in the claims, by

indicating that the present location is a type of predetermined geographical area. While the present location is undoubtedly a geographical area, it is not a "zone type," as that term is used in the claims. In particular, the present invention contemplates an interface that can be used to obtain many varieties, types or categories of location information. The prior art, Dunko and Fitch being examples, is concerned with returning one specific type of geographical data or a specific geographic location. The present invention advantageously contemplates using one interface, the recited request and reply, to be a universal interface for obtaining all kinds of geographical data. In order to be universal, a plurality of zone types are predefined. Then the zone types are used in the request to decipher the type of geographical data being requested. In contrast, the prior art presumes a specific type of data is always being requested. For example, Dunko assumes that the information being requested is a pinpoint (present) location. To obtain such information in accordance with the present invention, the request would need to include some type of identifier to indicate that the pinpoint location is the zone type. More precisely, according to the present invention, the request would have to include a particular zone type from among multiple predefined zone types. That is, in the example, the pinpoint zone type would merely be one zone type among other zone types, for example a ZIP-code zone type, state zone type or other predefined area. The prior art fails to teach this use of a "zone type of a plurality of predefined zone types," as required and recited in the independent claims.

Hence, the independent claims are novel, not obvious and patentable. The dependent claims are patentable for at least the reasons given above and their dependence on the patentable independent claims.

CONCLUSION

All pending claims are in condition for allowance. Allowance at an early date is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Reginald J. Hill", is written over a horizontal line.

Reginald J. Hill
Registration No. 39,225
Attorney for Applicants

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JENNER & BLOCK LLP
One IBM Plaza
Chicago, IL 60611
(312) 222-9350